

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NASA/I/JVZIMMERMAN:TMG

APPROVED BY OES/APT/SA: DAVOGT

NEA/EGY:GRBEYER

NE/CD(AID):JWILLIAMS (SUBS)

I/AWFRUTKIN/NASA (ON DRAFT)

AID/NESA:JROBERTS

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TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR LANDSAT GROUND STATION

REF: CAIRO 1841

1. DEPARTMENT AND NASA PLEASED TO LEARN OF CONTINUING HIGH LEVEL GOE INTEREST IN LANDSAT PROGRAM. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, WISH TO HOLD OUT PROSPECT FOR USG FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EGYPTIAN LANDSAT GROUND STATION. FOLLOWING PERTAINS:

A. AS ACKNOWLEDGED REFTTEL, EGYPT WILL BE COVERED BY ITALIAN GROUND STATION NOW OPERATING NEAR ROME. IRANIAN STATION, WHICH SHOULD BE OPERATING IN 1977, WILL ALSO PROVIDE COVERAGE. BOTH STATIONS WILL BE OBLIGATED TO PROVIDE EGYPT ANY DESIRED DATA. THEREFORE EGYPTIAN STATION IS NOT REQUIRED FOR DATA ACCESS.

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B. NEVERTHELESS, NASA POUCHING STANDARD LANDSAT GROUND

STATION AGREEMENT WHICH PROVIDES FOR FOREIGN AGENCY ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUND STATION (RECEIVING/PROCESSING FACILITIES) AND FOR SERVICING NASA AND PUBLIC DATA REQUIREMENTS IN RETURN FOR ACCESS TO LANDSAT SATELLITES. AGREEMENT ALSO GIVES NASA OPTION FOR IMPOSING FEE TO SHARE LANDSAT SPACE SEGMENT COSTS. NASA RECENTLY ANNOUNCED OPTION

WILL BE TAKEN UP INITIALLY AT RATE OF 200,000 DOLLARS PER STATION PER YEAR, FIRST PAYMENT 6 MONTHS AFTER STATION OPERATIONAL.

C. COST OF ESTABLISHING LANDSAT GROUND STATION RANGES FROM 2-6 MILLION DOLLARS DEPENDING LARGELY ON EXTENT OF DATA PROCESSING CAPABILITY SELECTED. MOST RECENT GROUND STATION CONTRACT AWARDED VALUED AT 4.3 MILLION DOLLARS EXCLUDING BUILDINGS AND LAND. (DETAILED COST INFO ALSO BEING POUCHED.)

2. BECAUSE NASA CHARGING LANDSAT STATIONS FEE, NASA AND AID HAVE AGREED TO ATTEMPT TO AVOID AID SUPPORT OF SUCH STATIONS. INSTEAD, USG EMPHASIZING DEVELOPMENT OF AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL TRAINING/DATA INTERPRETATION PROGRAMS. EXAMPLE IS US PARTICIPATION IN ECA STUDY MISSION WHICH WILL VISIT CAIRO. (ITINERARY BEING SENT SEPTTEL FROM ADDIS.) EMBASSY SHOULD ENCOURAGE EGYPTIAN PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF ECA AND SIMILAR REGIONAL TRAINING/DATA USE ACTIVITIES. THIS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN VIEW ACTIVE EGYPTIAN ACADEMY REMOTE SENSING DATA INTERPRETATION PROGRAM WHICH USG ALREADY SUPPORTING.

3. SHOULD GOE WISH PURSUE SUBJECT OF GROUND STATION (USING OWN RESOURCES), NASA HAPPY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION. EMBASSY SHOULD EMPHASIZE, HOWEVER, THAT EGYPTIAN DATA REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET IN TIMELY MANNER THROUGH DIRECT ARRANGEMENT WITH ITALIAN OR IRANIAN GROUND STATIONS. IN USG VIEW, THEREFORE, EGYPTIAN RESOURCES MAY BE SUBSTANTIALLY ECONOMIZED WITH MORE EFFECTIVE EXPENDITURE ON FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ALREADY SUCCESSFUL DATA INTERPRETATION PROGRAMS. INGERSOLL

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